

## SUMMARY OF OBJECTIONS TO PITSEA PLANNING APPLICATION

There were 350 standard objection letters received citing opposition on the grounds of:

Health and safety – The site is unsuitable for human habitation due to: it is an area likely to flood; the air quality is affected by the volume of traffic using the A13 above it; dangers posed by the close proximity of two railway lines; cess pits will not provide a suitable method of waste disposal for this type of development and have associated health risks.

Environment – The proposed development would have a detrimental effect on the environment of this green area: the local area contains grasses and plants of special interest which are home to rare insects and small animals; bats can be seen feeding and are probably roosting in the area.

Local plans – A caravan site with mobile homes and touring vans will not be in keeping with the planned regeneration of Pitsea.

Public right of way – There is currently a footpath which may be impeded by the proposed development.

The other 123 objections were individual letters, though some were the same – couples or family members sending in the same letter individually signed. These often cited the same grounds for opposing the development as in the standard form, but with additional reasons.

One of the most common reasons given was that the land had previously been earmarked for commercial or industrial use, which is not mentioned in the standard form of objection but did have a familiar format, as if it had been lifted from something official. Many people felt strongly that in an area of low employment any opportunities for more jobs for the community should be given preference. Local employment for local people. There was also reference to a proposal for a sports facility or the relocation of Basildon Football Club on the site, which again was a preferred option.

As well as the standard grounds for opposition the other common reasons given were:

Increased traffic, parking and poor access

Strain on local schools, doctors, dentists, police

Dangers of gas canisters

Previous 'illegal' Travellers caused lots of problems

Fear of disturbance, intimidation and trouble – people wouldn't feel safe, especially using the public footpath and green areas for dog walking, bird watching

Fear of crime – theft, damage, vandalism, trespass, dumping – police and council have no control

Worry that the site would increase in size beyond the original five caravans, would become another Dale Farm

Essex has more than its fair share of Traveller sites, the burden should be shared nationally

'Invasion' of Travellers, children, dogs  
Friction between settled population and Travellers  
Need for security fences  
Effect on property values, saleability of property  
Previous petition with 5,000 signatures

Many people were angry about a Gypsy site when they had been promised a £5m regeneration scheme for Pitsea

There were some more humanitarian concerns raised:  
Several people mentioned 'arcings' from the railway lines and the dangers to young children of living so close to the railway  
That the close proximity of the railway and the flyover were detrimental to anyone living there  
That it's unfair to subject those who want to live on the land to this kind of living  
Would you want your family to live there  
That the land is not suitable for the non-needy let alone the most needy

As well as the usual:  
Gypsies are unemployed, illiterate, uneducated  
Housing should be for people born and bred here  
Would you like a Gypsy site near your home? Will not voice a bigger concern at this time ...  
Unfair for the Council to say any planning application that affects the price and saleability cannot be used as a reason to object  
More worthwhile use can be found that would bring benefit to residents

One person said they have no problem in principle with the Travelling community and then talks about potential problems of theft or damage

Then we have:  
Do Travellers need a fixed location?  
Does Gypsy mean true Romanies?